

The Religious Inquirer AND GOSPEL ANCHOR.

Devoted to the Exposition, Defence and Promulgation of the Christian Religion.

'THOU BRINGEST CERTAIN STRANGE THINGS TO OUR EARS—WE WOULD KNOW, THEREFORE, WHAT THESE THINGS MEAN.'

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A DISCOURSE.

BY L. S. EVERETT.

'And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.' Luke 17: 5.

Among all the duties enjoined upon us by the sublime religion of our Master, there is no one that is more difficult of performance, than that of forgiveness. When our fellow beings have trespassed against us, especially if we feel persuaded that they did it intentionally, although we may find good evidence that they have sincerely repented of the deed, it is hard to overlook the fault. It is not enough, that they are no longer disposed to do us an injury; it is not enough, that they have been justly punished; it is not enough, that they are disposed to make restitution, to the extent of their ability; we feel unpleasantly whenever we reflect that they *once* entertained a disposition to do us injustice. The difficulty increases, when, after having done wrong once, and sought, and obtained our forgiveness, they trespass against us a second time. A repetition of the offence seems to be greatly aggravated, and is greatly aggravated by the circumstances of the case; and we find it very difficult to forgive an offender a second time. We begin to suspect the sincerity of his repentance, and are apt to think him incorrigible. The difficulty increases in a fearful ratio, on another, and another repetition of unjust actions; and, on a first thought, it seems to be almost impossible, for any human being, to comply with the requirement of the gospel, by which we are called upon to forgive an offending brother many times, and do it freely.

A plain exposition of this duty, by the great Teacher, led the apostles to make the request expressed in the language of the text. He had just exhorted them to take heed to themselves. 'If thy brother,' said he, 'trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying "I repent;" thou shalt forgive him.' On hearing this the apostles said unto the Lord, 'Increase our faith.'

Dr. Doddridge has given us an interesting paraphrase of this passage, which I will quote, as it will assist us in our reflections upon the

subject to be more particularly considered at this time. He renders it thus—'Take heed to yourselves, therefore, that you may govern all your passions aright, and particularly your resentments, by which otherwise much sin may be occasioned both to yourselves and others. And if any brother trespass against thee, do not lay up a secret grudge against him for it, but plainly and faithfully rebuke him, endeavouring to convince him of the evil he has committed; and if he appear to repent of his fault, forgive him immediately, without insisting on any rigorous satisfaction. And if he trespass against thee again and again, even though he should repeat his fault seven times in day, and seven times in a day return to thee, seriously saying, "I repeat of my folly, and am heartily sorrow for the injury I have done thee,—thou shalt forgive him even these repeated offences."

'Then the apostles said unto the Lord, Lord, we are sensible that in this instance, as well as in several others, we have need to pray that thou wouldst increase our faith. O, quicken our apprehension of the reality and importance of the motives by which all thy commands are enforced, and of the authority by which they are dictated; that we may not scruple to submit even to such precepts as these, how hardsoever they may bear upon flesh and blood.'

Now observe—the sentiment which is most obviously taught in the subject before us, is this—viz.—that a firm belief of certain facts, is highly essential,—indeed, that we cannot perform our respective duties *without such belief to aid us*. Such is the imperfection of our knowledge—such are the infirmities of our nature—such is the strength of our passions—such the deceitfulness of our own hearts—and such are the temptations to which we are necessarily exposed, that 'without faith it is impossible to please God.' The apostles had been instructed in relation to a most important christian duty; but they felt themselves incompetent to the performance of it, without the aid of a more full, and entire confidence in certain divine realities, with which they were already somewhat acquainted. Hence their earnest request, 'Lord increase our faith.' They had *some* faith; but they felt the need of *more*—they wanted the faith of assurance—the faith that would enable them to triumph, not only over the temptations, and evils, with which they were surrounded; but a faith which would enable them to triumph over *themselves*—over all unworthy thoughts, passions, propensities, prejudices, and inclinations, which might lead them aside from the high, honorable, and glorious course, which their Master had marked out for them. And if they felt the need of an increase of their faith—they, who enjoyed the privilege of listening to the instructions of him who 'spake as never man spake,'—with how much propriety may

we, and all christians of the present day, adopt their language, and petition Heaven for an enlargement of *our faith*—for an increase of our confidence in the divine realities which have been made manifest by his appearing.

Before we proceed to consider the particular truths which should be recognized as the proper objects of an active and efficacious faith, let us notice some of the characteristics by which this faith should be distinguished.

And we observe, in the first place, that it is one characteristic of a true faith, that it is *scriptural*—founded upon the revealed will of God, and upon his character and purpose, as we find them described in the sacred volume,—A belief in human inventions—in the traditions and commandments of men—in the speculations of those who are uninspired, and unenlightened, is not the faith which we are required to cherish. Such a faith can never prepare us for the cheerful, and acceptable performance of our duty.—This has been often tried, and as often found wanting. To pray for the increase of such a faith would be highly improper, and, should such a prayer be answered, the petitioner would be worse off than before.

Secondly: Another characteristic of a true faith is, that it 'purifies the heart,' and strengthens our good resolutions. It serves to place before us correct motives and to excite a love of virtue and holiness. It makes manifest the reasonableness of God's commands, and teaches us that it is impossible for him to require any thing of his children, that is not perfectly consistent with their best good and happiness.

Thirdly: a true faith is perfectly *consistent*. It is consistent with the reason and fitness of things—it is consistent in respect to the various truths which are the objects of it; it never acknowledges the existence of two facts which are opposed to each other. It harmonizes with all that is rational, though it relates to that which is invisible.

Having said this of the nature of a true faith, we are next to consider some of the truths which are to be believed. The leading truths which recognizes by a consistent, purifying, scriptural faith, are the following.—

1. The existence, power, and wisdom of God. A belief in the existence of God, is the elementary principle of religion. The mind must fully recognize the being of a God, or it can have no inducement either to love, or obey him. We must acknowledge that he is *omnipotent*, in order that we may rely upon his ability to protect and bless us. Our minds must confess that he is infinitely wise, that we may feel assured of the accomplishment of his plans.

But here, it may be observed, that no finite mind can fully comprehend, either the mode of its existence, the greatness of his power, or the infinitude of his wisdom. We can admit

the fact that he does exist, the fact that he is all-powerful, and the fact that his wisdom is perfect; but here we stop. We cannot by searching find him out.

2. A consistent, purifying, and scriptural faith, is a full recognition of the infinite goodness, mercy, benevolence, and love of God. These are the moral perfections of God, and may be reckoned among the *moral objects* of faith. In believing thus, we necessarily judge of these moral perfections of God, by what we know of such qualities; and our knowledge is derived from our own experience, and observation, and from certain *perceptible* effects, produced by those actions which are supposed to proceed from *principles to which we have given these names*.

We say that the principle of *goodness* inclines its possessor to promote the happiness of his fellow creatures—that it is inconsistent with the infliction of any unnecessary pain upon any sentient being. We say that *mercy* is a principle which inclines its possessor to mitigate suffering, to alleviate distress, and to labor for the best good of all. We say that *benevolence* inclines its possessor to extend favors to the undeserving, to supply the wants of the needy, and to raise up the oppressed: We say that *love* is a divine affection, which inclines its possessor to adopt all practicable means, to add joy to rejoicing, and felicity to happiness.

3. The true faith recognises the divine authority of Christ, and the *divinity*, and the *success* of his mission. It admits that he was the Messiah—the sent of God, and that his commands, his precepts, and his doctrines, are all fully in accordance with the will of God. It admits that he undertook to accomplish the reconciliation of the world, in strict obedience to the high behest of him who inhabiteth eternity; and that for this reason, it is evident that he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

Now these we regard as some of the more prominent, important, and leading truths, recognized by a christian faith. It will be perceived that they are, strickly speaking, so many distinct propositions;—and you will observe, that I have not attempted to draw any *inferences* from the truths mentioned; I have merely stated the *facts* which it is necessary for us to believe, in order that we may be qualified to discharge those obligations which God hath imposed upon us. And it will be found, that, as respects these things, *all christians are agreed*. No intelligent disciple of Jesus will accuse us of having gone beyond the letter of the gospel, in either of the statements made in the progress of this discourse, thus far; and if we disagree with others, in what remains to be said, it will be in the conclusions, at which we may arrive, in reasoning from premises acknowledged to be correct. And with these things in mind, we may proceed in a course of reasoning which will show that an increase of faith in certain popular doctrines, would by no means prepare us for performing the duties which we owe to God and our fellow men.

We may well suppose that the essential *principles* of religious faith were plainly taught by our Saviour, and distinctly understood by his apostles. We may venture to go so far as to say, that each of the facts that have now been mentioned, had been plainly stated; and fully embraced, by the apostles. Still, finding themselves called upon to perform an important du-

ty, they felt the need of a still further enlargement of their views, and an increase of their confidence in the divine realities which had been partly unfolded to their minds, and they cried 'Lord increase our faith.'

Let us now suppose, for the sake of the argument, that the apostles, at the time when they besought their master to increase their faith, stood precisely on the ground now occupied by that very respectable portion of the christian fraternity who believe in the doctrine of endless suffering. Their master, knowing them to be sound in the faith, called upon them to forgive an offending brother seven times in a day. We will further suppose, that, in doing this, he intended to have them reduce their *faith to practice*—to show forth its consistency, and its efficacy, in *their works*. Finding in their own nature something which seemed to render it impossible for them to do as he had commanded them, without divine aid, they cried, 'Lord increase our faith.' They seemed to want something in addition to what they found themselves possessed of; some additional light and strength from on high.

Suppose, now, that their prayer was answered. In compliance with their request, the God of glory removes the veil which had before obscured their mental vision, and sublime realities are presented to their astonished minds! As yet, they had none no further than to recognize the facts which we have mentioned, as the objects of a christian faith, and to entertain the common idea of endless misery. But now they have arrived to an interesting crisis in their spiritual affairs—they are about to receive 'confirmation strong as proof from holy writ,' of things which they had before but imperfectly realized. Intervening ages seem to have been swept away,—the judgment is set, and the world of mankind, raised from their graves, are before the throne of God, trembling with apprehensions, and awaiting the sentence which shall either reinstate them in the favor of their Creator, or banish them from his presence forever!

Let it not be forgotten, that they had besought the Lord for this new manifestation of truth, that they might learn how to *forgive*—how to forgive offending brethren, and how to forgive their enemies. Their request for more light, or for an increase of their faith, had been addressed to him who had taught them that it was their duty to forgive not once, but seven times—not seven times only, but seventy times seven;—to him, who, afterwards, when expiring upon the cross, prayed for his enemies, saying 'Father forgive them.' And this new vision of faith is presented to their view, that they may learn of God, and be in subjection to this great principle of his gospel.

The messenger cries, 'O, ye disciples of Jesus—O, ye chosen ones—O, ye, whom he hath selected to proclaim his doctrine—Behold, first of all, the God in whom ye believe. He is now seated upon the throne of judgment! Behold his face—it is distorted by the frown which indicates his wrath! Behold his hand—it is lifted up in vengeance! Hear his voice—he speaks—the heavens tremble—the earth has fled away—*salvation for my friends! destruction for my enemies!* Smiles of joy are lighted up on the countenances of the redeemed—they shout hosannas to the God who hath forgiven and saved them, and enjoy extatic delights at his right hand!'

But look again, Behold the wicked! There

they stand, the victims of omnipotent wrath! In their hopelessness, they beg for mercy—they confess they have sinned—that they have violated the law of God—that they have slighted the invitations of mercy—that they have done violence to their own convictions,—but they cry for pardon—

'Shev pity Lord, O Lord forgive,
And let repenting rebels live.'

But no! Should they make 'the small, the almost no request,' to be annihilated, after they shall have suffered a million of years, their presumption, in asking the favor, would bring down upon them a ten-fold vengeance. No—God will not forgive them—they have sinned away their day of grace, and there is no pardon, no salvation—there is no deliverance—there is no portion for them but damnation without end.

How can they expect less, when they have so grievously offended God? But here, a question arises—have they *injured* their Maker?—Have they robbed him of his glory, of his happiness? Have they done any thing more, than to injure themselves? No—still it will be an act of justice to send them to perdition. And now we are told, that, *by obtaining very clear views of this state of things, we shall be qualified to perform the duty of forgiveness towards our fellow creatures!*

Suffer me to place by the side of this popular fallacy, one of the moral lessons contained in Christ's sermon on the mount. 'Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy? But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Mat. 5: 48; 48.

And now I ask—if we proceed upon the ground that our Saviour taught the doctrine of endless suffering in hell, and if his disciples asked, and obtained, an *increase* of their confidence in that doctrine, *how did this new confirmation of their previous convictions qualify them for performing the duty of forgiveness, seven times in a day, for persevering in this until they had forgiven seventy times seven?* Is it not evident, if God has declared it to be his purpose *not to forgive his enemies*, that, by becoming acquainted with that purpose, and in endeavoring to be like him, we shall feel *authorized* nay *solemnly required* to withhold forgiveness from those who trespass against us? And is this the boasted efficacy of the doctrine of endless misery?

But we may be told that God will withhold forgiveness from none but the finally impenitent. But have we yet to learn, that the Bible says nothing about such sinners? Have we yet to learn, that there is no proof that any will remain finally impenitent? If the admission will accommodate those who believe the doctrine of endless suffering, we will allow that all who remain eternally impenitent will remain eternally miserable—and what then? They have gained nothing, and we have lost nothing; for Christ was exalted a Prince and a Saviour,

to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins—and we have no proof that hardness of heart will exist when blindness of mind has been done away.

It would seem, that the apostles could not have been qualified for performing the duty enjoined upon them, by an enlargement of their faith in the doctrine of endless misery. And if that doctrine had been taught by their divine master, they were placed in a most disagreeable predicament. For if, in praying for an increase of their faith, they desired to believe in the salvation of a greater number than their doctrine allowed, they virtually asked the Lord to suffer them to become heretical—and if they sought for some additional proof of partialism, the more they were confirmed in the faith, the worse would be their moral condition.

Let us now take another view of this subject. We will suppose that Jesus had inculcated the general principles of a religion founded upon the love of God. We will suppose that he had taught his apostles those truth which we have stated as being the objects of a consistent christian faith—viz—the truth of God's existence, wisdom, and power, the truth that he is infinitely good, merciful and benevolent; and the truth that Christ had the authority to destroy sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. Having been instructed in these matters, though they had not, as yet, drawn the grand conclusion from these general propositions, and finding themselves in need of divine assistance, to enable them to forgive their brethren, in the manner required, they ardently desired some further light, some confirmation of their general convictions. We will suppose that they needed nothing more than an increase of their confidence in relation to the glorious result of their Saviour's mission; and that in compliance with their request, the holy spirit unfolded to their minds what we regard as the sublime doctrine of the gospel.—We must now carry our supposition still further;—we must suppose that the messenger of the new and better covenant quickened their moral vision, and thus enabled them to see clearly the final issue of the plan of grace. They realize at once, that God is good; and therefore delights in promoting the happiness of his offspring—that he is merciful, forgiving iniquity transgression and sin—that he is Love, and therefore cannot punish his children any more than he knows will be for their advantage. They behold in Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith—they, see him triumphant the all conquering conqueror. By his instrumentality they see the world reconciled unto God; they hear ascriptions of praise bursting from the lips of all intelligences—they behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the iniquity of the world—they behold, and lo! 'every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, in the sea, and all that are in them, is heard crying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever'—The judge of all the earth declares, in the presence of the assembled universe, 'this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased'—he prayed for the forgiveness of his enemies, and they are now forgiven!

And now, O my soul, what a lesson is this! I am called upon to forgive and bless my enemies—to do good to them that hate me; and my partial feelings and stubborn resentments are continually rising up in opposition to the

teachings of the spirit. *O Lord, increase my faith!* Enable me to realize that my God will forgive his enemies, that I may learn how to forgive mine. Tell me not of his wrath—tell me not that he will be angry forever, lest I should continue to violate his most sacred commands. O, let me realize, more fully, and more constantly, the impartiality of his grace, and become more and more deeply impressed with a saving, and purifying sense of his loving kindness!

And thus, my hearers, do we discover, that while the doctrine of endless suffering affords no assistance in our struggles with our passions, and depraved inclinations, that of the universal salvation of our race, furnishes us with the strongest imaginable inducement, to comply with the divine commands. This doctrine, founded as it is upon the infinite benevolence of God, and confirmed by the labors, sufferings, and death of his Son, is calculated to aid us in every good word and work.

If our faith in the divine realities which it discloses has been hitherto unproductive of these good consequences, let us devoutly seek for a more full and effectual knowledge of the goodness and glory of our God. Seeing that it is the determination of our heavenly Father, to forgive all his enemies, let us aim at becoming so far like him, as to forgive those who trespass against us.

Thus shall we best adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour—for never does religion of the right kind appear so lovely, as when it shines forth in the words and actions of those who profess to love our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pioneer.

EXTRACT OF A SERMON.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.' Luke iii. 4.

On our present opportunity of assembling, my friends, I wish to speak of this herald of the Messiah, and of ourselves. May that Being who gave the energy of inspiration to the Baptist, grant that we may not listen to his requisitions in vain.

I. I am to speak, in the first place, of this herald or harbinger of Jesus Christ. This voice in the desert, proclaiming the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, was now heard. John the Baptist stood by the river Jordan, twenty seven miles eastward of Jerusalem, and immense multitudes crowded to his baptism. All Jerusalem, all Judea, and the adjacent country, came swarming along the extensive plain and banks. 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord,' his powerful voice proclaimed; 'the Messiah is coming; prepare to bid him welcome. On the approach of this royal personage, let every valley be filled; let every mountain and eminence be levelled; let the crooked places be made straight, and the rough roads smooth; for you are all to behold a Savior from God. Prepare your hearts for the advent of this great deliverer.'

Among the multitudes that went forth to be baptized, many of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and other impenitent characters presented themselves.—The Baptist knew them; his inspired vision pierced their veil of disguise; and in allusion to the vicefulness of their spirit, the hypocrisy of their hearts, and the depravity of their behavior, he addressed them with the explicitness of truth. A stern moralist, he addressed them with unsoftened severity, the unawed fearlessness, of a message from the

Almighty. An austere prophet from the mountains he lifts up his voice in the wilderness: 'O brood of vipers! who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Who has warned you to flee from the calamities impending over Jerusalem and Judea? Reform. Give evidences of reformation.'

Yes, my friends, you hear the voice in the wilderness proclaim: 'Make your escape by personal effort. Say not within yourselves, We belong to this sect or persuasion, to this prophet, patriarch, or reformer, and are therefore safe. Say not within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father; for I say to you, that even of these stones God is able to raise up children unto Abraham.'

As descendants of Abraham, the Jews viewed themselves with much pride and complacency.—They seemed to imagine that his faithfulness would compensate for their own degeneracy. In this respect they resembled those persons, who indulge in the dream so little regarded in this country, that an illustrious ancestry and other family distinction can shed a lustre on vice and infamy. The folly of this national pride it was the aim of the Baptist to discourage and expose: 'I say to you that of these stones, these insensible heathen, these Gentiles of the wilderness whom you despise, is God able to raise up children to Abraham?'

Now admitting the gentiles to such favor and privileges appeared to the Jews a natural impossibility?—The Baptist goes still farther: he admonishes his countrymen of approaching ruin,—that awful catastrophe, to which he has already alluded under the expression, wrath to come, or impending calamity. The Jewish peculiarity, government, & kingdom he represents as an unfruitful orchard or an orchard producing poisonous fruit, devoted to the axe & the fire. 'Even now,' he says, 'the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, which does not bear good fruit is to be hewn down and cast into the fire. As you fail to improve by God's goodness, he dooms you to perish. Even now the presages of your destruction are manifest; they are manifest in your hypocrisy and irreligion, your uncharitableness and injustice, your violence and faction. The sources of your superiority are drying up; the glory of your national prerogative is departing; your privileges are passing to gentiles and barbarians; the sun and moon of your dominion are darkening; the stars of your political splendor are falling from heaven; and your whole hemisphere wears the gloom of woe and desolation! Such is the voice of the stranger crying in the wilderness.'

In prospect of such ruin and annihilation, never was there a more natural inquiry made, than that of the multitudes, whether it was made in seriousness or derision: 'What shall we do?—Like a man of judgment and practical wisdom, the Baptist answered them according to their character and circumstances. To the affluent,—the dissembling Pharisee and voluptuous Sadducee,—he recommended a charitable disposition: He that has two coats, let him impart to him that has none; and he that has food let him do likewise.'

When the tax gatherers came to be baptised, they said to him, 'Master, and what shall we do?' Upon them he impressed the necessity of fair dealing, integrity, or ungrasping faithfulness in discharging the duties of their office: Exact no more than what is appointed to you by your superiors.

And when the soldiers came: they were Roman

soldiers, I presume, stationed throughout the country, to keep that conquered and tributary people in awe;—when the soldiers demanded of him, 'And what shall we do?' he cautioned them against seizing the property of the inhabitants and falsely informing against them, & he commanded them to be satisfied with their pay: Take by violence from no man; accuse no man falsely; and be content with your wages.

John you perceive, discovered prudence and discretion; the same wisdom and judgment, which the Messiah himself discovered; he avoided interfering with the political difficulties of his country. Was he then insensible to its conquered condition? O no; he sympathized with his countrymen in their subjugated state; his soul was indignant, he groaned for the oppression he has seen them endure; but the office to which he has been delegated, was not the office of a statesman. A harder bondage, a more intolerable oppression, he saw them enduring,—the bondage and oppression of sin. He had been commissioned by the Most High as a preacher of righteousness. He had been commissioned, before the great and terrible day of Jerusalem, to turn the heart of fathers with their children, and the heart of children with their fathers, lest the land should be smitten with a curse,—a curse unmitigated and universal; and to this commission he confined himself. Like the Sun of Righteousness, whose rising he came to announce, he did not depart from his individual sphere. No: he swerved not from his task; the duties of that sphere he deemed of momentous importance, & he performed them with boldness and ability. His day, however, was a brief day: soon was the voice in the wilderness mute in death. When that mightier one, that light of the world ascended, his lustre soon faded and he went down in blood. Soon also, alas! was that mightier luminary,—that light of the world,—extinguished in darkness. But, blessed be God, it rose again triumphant,—it rose with renovated glory,—it rose, and will set no more forever.—No my Christian friends, you are this day and this hour in the enjoyment of its healing beams.

II. Is the herald of the Messiah no more? Has the Messiah himself gone to the Father? Yea, my hearers, remain: you remain with that light around you, which the Sun of Righteousness shed upon the world.

And are you thus favored by Heaven? Do you enjoy the broad illumination of the gospel? the golden splendor on valley and mountain?—You may be compared to the multitudes that swarmed innumerable along the Jordan, from the Dead Sea to the lake of Tiberias, pressing forward to receive the baptism of John. On the morning and evening of the Sabbath, you assemble in this temple of Christian worship. I bid you welcome to the house of prayer, and would to God, that, like those eager multitudes, you each one felt the glowing emotion in your heart, prompting you to exclaim 'What then shall we do?'

Could I persuade myself, that you assembled with the same motives of wisdom, piety, and hope it would be a privilege and a comfort, like the voice in the desert, to accompany my replies to your individual circumstances. And may I not indulge this delightful persuasion? God forbid that I should do injustice to any one,—religious

or irreligious, Christian or heathen, servant of Jesus or slave of sin. A minister of Christ, except; indeed, when he departs from his sphere,—a minister of Christ judges no man. Character it is his duty to judge; to approve and recommend the virtuous and holy, to disapprove the vicious and unholy. He presents views of belief and unbelief of obedience and disobedience; he impresses on the heart the momentous consequences of both: and he leaves rational and accountable beings to their freedom of election,—to revelation, conscience, and impartial justice.

If, therefore, you exclaim with the multitudes along the Jordan: 'What, then, shall we do?' if this be the breathing of your souls, as I pray God it may be, whenever you enter this temple, whenever you participate in the enjoyments of domestic life, and whenever you mingle in scenes and pursuits of a public nature; I answer your question in the spirit of the voice from the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord in your hearts. Let all men every class of the community, be watchful over themselves,—watchful over those sins to which they are most exposed, and strive to preserve themselves from their dominion and tyranny. You are all in a state of trial, from which temptation to evil is inseparable. The perfection of a Christian, my friends, what is that perfection?—It is to avoid the vices, and to exemplify the virtues, of his individual station. Lay aside every weight, and the sin which easily entangles him, a Christian must run his appointed race with the strong resolve, the muscular might, the invincible patience of the soul. A Christian is a stranger on earth, bound homeward. He is seeking his own country. He longs, he languishes, for assurance of that better land of his heart.

My Christian friends, you hear the voice in the desert: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.' But where are the multitudes striving to make that preparation? Where are the multitudes pressing toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? The banks of the Jordan mourn; the banks of the Jordan are desolate, or only pressed by the foot of Turkish marauder or wandering pilgrim; and even in this land, this land indulged with light from heaven, how much remains unaccomplished! How few are seen preparing the way of the Lord? Throughout our country there is much hearing of the word. We

complain not of hearers, on the banks of our rivers and borders of the ocean; but O where are the doers, the vigorous strivers for the kingdom? Does the voice still proclaim in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord? Then once more for that anxious inquiry, O once more for that answering voice, which eighteen hundred years ago was heard along the Jordan: 'What then shall we do?' Ah! could I hear that voice, could I witness a real disposition to embrace the gospel, heart and hand; I should entertain the animating conviction, that the grace of God had not been bestowed in vain.—[Christian Register.

Communications.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS.

Original.

is it universally denied in Germany, where the literati in Biblical knowledge are a century in advance of any other people? And if as the orthodox say, Universalism has a licentious tendency, why is Germany distinguished for its morality and exalted piety?

If it is an error to believe and preach that all men will be saved, why pray for all unless in faith? Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Breathes the gospel aught but divine mercy, are not the mercies of Jehovah universal and infinite?

How can sin be finished, if it remain co- eternal with God himself?

Is not the charity of the gospel universal and greater than faith?

Are children born totally depraved? Except ye converted, &c.

Was not the penalty God attached to his law just? If so must not all sinners suffer endless misery (provided that be the penalty of his violated law) if God deal with them on the principles of strict and impartial justice? If men have justly merited the punishment of endless misery, and Christ came to save them from it, did he not come to hinder the execution of justice? And if God determined so to punish men and Christ came to save from punishment, did he not come to hinder the execution of God's design? In a word are God's and Christ's designs opposite—opposed to each other?

What is gospel salvation? Is it from deserved punishment, from sin already committed? Is salvation conditional? Are not holiness and salvation as applied to man the same?—Do not both imply absence from sin? Does not holiness in men include faith, repentance, obedience—Do not these assist in forming holiness or constitute parts of it? what propriety then in calling these graces conditions of salvation?

If God is immutable, how can he be one moment burning with implacable revenge against his creatures, and the next viewing them with the tenderest regard,—can a change in the creature effect a change in the Creator?

D. H.

LOVE OF GOD.

Original.

A celebrated writer has said that 'the love of God is that especial affection which he bears to his children.' This we believe to be true, for we see the manifestation of God's love not only in the oracles of divine truth, by the testimony which we have of his sending his only begotten Son into the world, but likewise throughout all created nature. We are led to love God because he first loved us, and to place our especial affections upon him for the numerous favors which he is constantly bestowing upon the children of men. His love flows freely and graciously on every hand, giving us the assurance that he is good unto all and that his tender mercies are over all the works of his hand.

We do not wish to be understood as saying that God possesses the passion of love as we do; because he no more possesses the passion of love which man does, than he possesses the kind of wrath which man has. But we believe the love of God, implies his absolute purpose and will, to deliver from the bondage of sin and misery all the creatures which he has made. 'God is love.' 'Love worketh no ill to its neighbor.'

Now it must either be shown that God is *not* love, or that endless sin and misery are not an 'ill,' before we can consistently deny the doctrine of the 'restitution of all things'; or else it must be shown that the love of God is not *ever lasting*. But what say the Scriptures? see Jer. xxxi. 'I have loved thee with an *everlasting love*.' See likewise Mal. iii. 6. 'For I am the Lord, I change not.' Zeph. iii. 17. It is said 'The Lord is mighty he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.'

It is not the suffering of Christ, nor the merits of men that are the cause of God's love, but it is of his own good pleasure, 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.' Christ is not sent as an *exchange* for our love, but God gave him as a token of his love to his children. *He that readeth let him understand.*

J. S.

INQUIRER AND ANCHOR.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1835.

LETTER TO DR. SPRAGUE NO. 2.—Dear Sir.—I have patiently waited to this time for some notice from you, of my letter of the 12th of Sept. but I have waited in vain. Allow me Sir, to call your attention once more to the subject of that Letter, and to invite your special attention to the matter therein contained. I have endeavored in vain from my own knowledge and reflection, to find a reason for that silence which you have observed. Can it be that the subject upon which I addressed you, is not sufficiently important to claim your attention? Is it possible that Dr. Sprague feels no interest in the question whether half the world is to be immortally happy, or interminably miserable? It cannot be that he is thus lost to the common feelings of sympathy for his kindred race, as not to feel and deeply feel upon the subject of their eternal destiny. Why then does he remain silent when invited to take hold of an investigation of that matter? Upon subjects of far less importance than this I have seen that you Sir, are willing to engage in an open investigation, and to discuss them with boldness and zeal. When the question arises whether the ancient christians drank the unfermented or fermented juice of the grape, you wield the pen of a ready writer, and fill many columns in our public journals, with arguments designed to prove that the wine used in those days was none other, than the fermented juice of the grape. Let me ask you Sir, what you discover in a couple of Hebrew words, which in importance is so vastly superior to the mighty question, whether myriads of your fellow creatures are to wall with devils in immortal pain, or sing the song of Moses and the Lamb? I feel bound to address you in the language of expostulation. I remember the language of Paul, which speaketh on this wise. 'Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit.' I perceive with regret that there appears no lack of disposition on your part to strive about words, but when things of infinite moment are presented, I grieve to see that you exhibit 'no head to reason, no heart to feel.' Can it be a lack of time which prevents you from attending to this subject? I know not how your time can be more profitably employed. You profess to believe that Universalism is a dangerous heresy, alike ruinous to the morals and the souls of men. Let me tell you Sir,

that this heresy, as you deem it is rapidly spreading around you. Its believers are multiplying, and within a few years, in your own state more than an hundred preachers have rose up and are constantly engaged in its promulgation. About three hundred societies have also been organized, and are rapidly multiplying, and in addition to all this, there are more than ten thousand papers circulated weekly, which are devoted to the exposition and defence of this doctrine. Now Sir, in view of these facts, I ask how could you more profitably spend your time than in doing something to stay the march of this growing heresy? If you really do believe the doctrine false and pernicious; and if you are in possession of arguments that will show its fallacy, how can you answer to God and your own conscience, for hiding that light under a bushel? I offer you Sir, the columns of this paper as a medium through which you may speak directly to Universalists themselves, and 'reason with them out of the scriptures.' I will venture to say, that through this and other papers which would copy your writings, you can be heard if you will, every week by more than fifty thousand Universalists. You can reason with them and show them their error, if indeed they are so unhappy as to believe a lie. I ask you then once more to think of these things. Here Sir, are more than fifty thousand Universalists to whom you may speak, and by whom you may be heard. You profess to believe that they are on the broad road to eternal ruin and leading others with them. They ask you, they urge you to speak, and show them that better way, and will you say that you have not time? You have time to write labored articles upon subjects far less important, and have you no time, to devote to the interests of those whom, you regard, as groping in the thick of darkness? Suffer me to tell you Sir, that I have taken up this matter in sober earnest. I am determined to know whether there is or is not a man in Albany, who has sufficient confidence in the long cherished doctrine of endless hell torments, to risk it, in a conflict with the sentiment of Universal salvation. As a strong man in your Israel, I appealed to you, not in the language of defiance but in sincerity and soberness, to come to the work, and I now forewarn you of my intention to push this subject to an issue if possible. I shall wait with patience a suitable time for your reply to this, and then if I hear not from you I shall proceed with my work, and the public will not fail of viewing the matter in its proper light. I regret that you have not seen fit to favor me with some small notice of my former communication. Let me tell you, that the offer I make you of the use of my columns, is a matter of courtesy, which the editors of your papers are not willing to extend to me, or those of like faith. It deserved at least a notice, and I am surprised that it has not found one. True, I have learned from painful experience, that I may not expect, from the popular religionists of this bigoted age, the candor and charity of the *christian*, but from you Sir, I did expect the courtesy of the gentleman. Shall I be disappointed? I pause for a reply. Respectfully yours.

I. D. WILLIAMSON.

REVIVALS.—Those fanatical excitements misnamed, 'revivals of religion' are becoming scarce, in this community. Among the twenty churches of this City, (Albany) we have not heard of a revival since last winter. There is something a little curious about this business which we should be extremely happy to have explained. We have repeatedly inquired why it is that these excite-

ments are rarely produced in the summer; but we have not yet been able to obtain a satisfactory answer. If they are what they are said to be, the exclusive work of God's holy spirit we cannot account for the fact that they should almost invariably occur in the winter. Can the spirit of God operate only in cold weather? And does the heat of the summer, drive the spirit away? Or is it a kind of periodical disease of the mind, which like some diseases of the body, return, and rages at particular seasons of the year? We wish some tract writer would write a tract upon this subject. It would doubtless be of incalculable advantage, as it would learn those who are anxious for revivals to take the proper time to carry on their operations. Seriously, however, we do not understand this matter. If these revivals are what we consider them to be, the work of men, and men alone, then we can easily see why they should rage only in the winter. In the summer, people have not time to attend to such things, but in the winter there is more leisure. Still if people really believe that these revivals can be instrumental in saving souls from an endless hell, they cannot be excused for suffering them to abate either in summer or winter. They ought to be engaged in them all the time. Come, come friend Kirk, the cold weather and long evenings are both at hand. Up get you and work—Perhaps friend Levings of Troy may come down and manufacture another case of conversion from Universalism. By the way, while we think of it, how does it happen that we do not hear any thing from our friend Levings touching the case of his favorite convert in Utica?

I. D. W.

'**GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.**'—The fire that we keep in our houses is a consuming fire; but the question is, what will it consume? Not gold nor silver nor precious stones, but wood, and hay and stubble. 'God is a consuming fire,' and the question is, what will he consume? Men or their works? 'The soul or its impurities?' Let Paul answer. 'The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.' 'If any man's work be burnt, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.'—Here the reader may perceive that this fire is to try every man's works, if these are like gold and silver and precious stones they may abide the fire: but if they are like hay and wood, and stubble, they shall be burned.—From the fact then, that God is a consuming fire, we may safely conclude, that the endless perpetuity of evil works is not according to the truth. The reader will do well to remember that sin and evil of every name and form are opposed to the nature of this fire, and of course must be numbered among the combustible materials that cannot abide its action. Righteousness and truth will come forth from it like gold from the furnace tried and precious, but sin and iniquity and every thing that maketh a lie, are but dross, and hay, and wood, and stubble, that are consumed by its power. And yet it is a fact that God's being a consuming fire, is frequently alleged as a strong reason, why sin and evil shall remain in eternal existence. Why of all things in the world, this is the very reason why it cannot continue forward. It is the pure gold of righteousness and good alone that can abide this fire, and as for the dross and alloy of sin and evil, they are in its power like the chaff before the wind.—'God is a consuming fire,' and we remark in conclusion, that this fire cannot be quenched or put out. It is as immutable as God, and it will continue to burn with a brighter and more brilliant flame, until its work shall be fully accomplished and every remaining vestige of sin and suffering and all that bears the name of evil shall be thoroughly and everlasting eradicated from the universe of his creation.

I. D. W.

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION.—We present our thanks to Br. Price for the copy of the discussion, between Dr. E. S. Ely and Br. A. C. Thomas, with which he had the kindness to favor us. We give notice that

the above work, in a neat dress and form, may be obtained at the variety Store, of our friend S. Van Schaack 392 South Market St. Albany. While we think of it, we also inform our friends that they may obtain at the above place, almost any Universalist work extant. Two excellent discourses from Br. S. Cobb, of Maldon, Mass., have just been received, and are worth purchasing, aye, and reading 'too.—Reader go and buy one, and see if we have not told the truth.

I. D. W.

DESIRE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.—The wise man says, 'the righteous desire only good.' Now we will hazard the assertion that there never was a truly righteous man, on earth who did not desire, the truth of the doctrine of universal salvation. The righteous man loves God with the whole heart, and desires that he may be glorified. Beholding in the system of universal salvation a plan of redemption which would if carried into operation give the highest glory to God, he most ardently desires, that the good work may go on, and the whole ransomed family of man, unite at last with one heart and one voice in ascribing blessing, and honor, and power, and dominion, and glory unto him that sitteth upon the throne forever and ever. Not only so, but the righteous man loves his fellows and desires to see them happy. His soul has been baptized in the fountain of love, and the happiness of his fellow creatures, is indissolubly linked with his own. Hence his most ardent desire is, that his kindred his neighbors, his friends, his enemies, and finally the whole family of man, may be brought to a participation of the joys of the blessed in heaven.

In this view of things the reader will at once perceive, that the doctrine of universal salvation is one of those good things which every good man must, and does desire. How then does it happen, that it is so often called a bad doctrine? Does not the scripture tell us that the righteous desire *only* good? And is it not true that every righteous man does desire, and pray for the truth of this doctrine? If the righteous desire it, then it must be good, for they desire nothing bad. Here is one more thing that we would have the reader remember, and never for a moment when reflecting upon this subject to forget. It is this. The Lord in whose hand is all power, to rule, and control and govern at his will hath said, that he will fulfil the desire of the righteous. Reader, think of this, and it shall do thee good. Meditate upon it and it shall make thy heart rejoice, and thy tongue to sing for joy.

I. D. W.

CONVERSION FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.—Conversions from Partialism to Universalism have become so common in this age that we hardly think it worth time to notice the half of them. But as the up-builders of satans kingdom are so anxious to proclaim to the world the conversion of every person and thing, to the doctrine of endless torture, we think it just and proper that when a *public* advocate is led to exclaim, 'whereas I was once blind now I see,' that it should be made known to the world.

The following from the 'Banner' gives us the intelligence of the conversion of a Free Will Baptist clergyman in Maine, from the darkness of Partialism to the glorious light of the gospel.

We have lately been favored with the gratifying intelligence, that Rev. Thomas Flanders of San-gerville, Me. who for many years has been an

honored preacher in the Freewill Baptist communion, has had his faith increased to the stature of that Hope and that charity which the gospel requires, whereby he has come to embrace, with gratitude the doctrine of a world's salvation through its all sufficient Redeemer. Mt. F. has left his former connexion without reproach—his Christian character being strictly exemplary. It has not been our pleasure to be personally acquainted with this brother; but he is represented to us a gentleman of a strong and vigorous mind and an able minister of the New Testament.—He formerly resided in N. Hampshire, and was for some years a member of the Legislature of that State. On his removal to Maine, he continued to preach in the Freewill Baptist connexion, till he was led by the spirit of divine Truth to discover both a fulness and a sufficiency in Christ for the salvation of all mankind. He is now an open and acceptable advocate of the doctrine of universal salvation. We bid him welcome as a fellow laborer in the true Gospel vineyard, and pray the God of the harvest, to make him eminently successful in turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

TRUTH IS ONWARD.—We learn by the Magazine and Advocate that the truths of the everlasting gospel are progressing rapidly in Cincinnati and vicinity. The meeting in that city have never been as well attended as at the present.

Three new Societies have been formed within thirty miles of that city within three weeks.

Verily the truth is mighty, and will prevail.

ANOTHER INSTITUTE.—Br. Singer, writes from Cincinnati, Ohio, that the friends of religious freedom, have laid the foundation of 'Madison Liberal Institute,' in Madisonville, eight miles east of that city. The building is already begun and will soon be completed ready for the reception of students.

Schools free from the baneful influence of partialism are being established in various sections of our land, and it is hoped that the friends of liberty and religious truth will give them their support.

UNIVERSALIST REGISTER AND ALMANAC.—We are informed that this work by Brs. Sanderson and Whiston is now in press, and will soon be ready for sale. It will contain besides the usual calendar and some valuable reading matter, a general view of the statistics of the Universalist denomination in the United States. The names and residences of clergymen, societies, churches, number of members, &c. &c. We advise our friends not to be in haste about purchasing an Almanac, as this will soon be in market, and will contain much that is interesting to those of the household of faith. We shall have a supply for sale at our office in Albany soon.

I. D. W.

CONVENTION RECORDS.—In answer to the numerous inquiries which are made respecting the records of the U. S. Convention, we take this opportunity to inform our readers that Br. P. Price, proposes to issue them, with the Constitution, Bye Laws, and the Sermon preached by Br. S. R. Smith, in a pamphlet.

We shall therefore be unable to furnish our readers with the proceedings of that body until the pamphlet is printed.

NEW SOCIETY.—A society of Universalists has been formed in Nashua Village, [Dunstable] N. H. under the name of 'The first Universalist Society in Dunstable, N. H.'

Br. David Pickering, of Providence, R. I. has accepted an invitation to take the pastoral charge of the original Universalist Society in the city of New York, of which the late lamented Edward Mitchell was pastor. Br. Pickering will commence his labors in New York forthwith.

MORE GOSPEL PREACHERS.—We learn by the 'Southern Evangelist' that Dr. Bell, of Newburgh, O. has recently renounced the doctrine of endless torture, and has commenced proclaiming the everlasting gospel.

Br. L. Harris, of Springfield, Pa. and Br. P. P. Fowler, of N. Y. recently received Letters of fellowship from the Chataigne, [N. Y.] Association of Universalists.

MINUTES.

Of the Proceedings of the Universalist Historical Society at its session in Hartford, Ct., Sept. 16th and 17th, 1835.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, SEPT. 16.—The society was called to order by the President. After reading the proceedings of the last session, the society went into an election of its officers for the ensuing year. The following gentlemen were duly elected:

HOSEA BALLOU 2d, President.

PITT MORSE, Vice President.

THOS. J. SAWYER, Secretary.

THOS. WHITTEMORE, Treasurer.

Corresponding Secretaries.

William A. Drew, *Maine.*

Thomas Whittemore, *Massachusetts.*

Barton Ballou, *Rhode Island.*

Asher Moore, *Connecticut.*

Wm. S. Balch, *New Hampshire.*

Warren Skinner, *Vermont.*

Dolphus Skinner, *N. Y.*

I. D. Williamson, *N. Y.*

Levi C. Marvin, *New Jersey.*

Abel C. Thomas, *Pennsylvania.*

Sam'l. P. Skinner, *Maryland.*

John Corr. Jr. *Virginia.*

G. C. Marchant, *North Carolina.*

Allen Fuller, *South Carolina.*

Allen Green, *Georgia.*

L. F. W. Andrews, *Alabama.*

Frederick Hooker, *Mississippi.*

Jonathan Speyker, *Tennessee.*

Wm. E. Camp, *Louisiana.*

Seth T. Sawyer, *Illinois.*

Jonathan Kidwell, *Indiana.*

A. A. Davis, *Ohio.*

Nathaniel Stacy, *Michigan.*

Solomon Bingham, *Lower Canada.*

Oliver Smith, *New Brunswick.*

Amos Seamans, *Nova Scotia.*

John Relly Beard, *England.*

The Secretary introduced a report in which he acknowledged the receipt of Letters from L. F. W. Andrews, Corresponding Secretary of Alabama, Allen Fuller, of South Carolina, and Barton Ballou, of Rhode Island, giving information concerning the condition of the cause of Universalism in their respective limits. He also acknowledged the receipt of a considerable number of Books and pamphlets and papers on Universalism.

A. C. Thomas, Corresponding Secretary, of Pennsylvania, read before the Society an interesting article on Old Universalist Books in his possession, all published prior to the year 1800.

THURSDAY, 17.—Thomas Whittemore introduced the following preamble and resolution which was adopted.

Whereas, members of the Society may possess valuable books, pamphlets, and papers, which they might be indisposed to present to the Society; and whereas it is important that the Society should know where they are to be found; Therefore

Resolved, That members be requested to furnish the Secretary with a list of all books, pamphlets, and papers relating to the subject of Universalism, in their possession, published prior to the year 1825, and that it be the duty of the Secretary to make out from these several lists, a catalogue of all such books, pamphlets, and papers together with the name of the possessor, as the Secretary's Library does not contain.

On motion, the Secretary was requested to open, if practicable, a correspondence with the Rev. J. R. Beared, of Manchester, and Rev. David Thom, of Liverpool, England, and with such other individuals in England or on the Continent, as would probably promote the objects of the Society.

Adjourned to meet in the city of New York on the 3d Wednesday and Thursday of September 1836.

H. BALLOU, 2d, President.
THOS. J. SAWYER, Secretary.

The Secretary would take this opportunity of publicly expressing the thanks of the Society to those individuals who have contributed to its library; and respectfully to solicit from ministers and laymen further contributions. It is earnestly desired the Library of the Society should contain every work relating to Universalism, whether in behalf or in opposition, which is to be found in America or Europe.

He would also urge upon the attention of all members of the Society & especially of Corresponding Secretaries, the importance of action and persevering exertions for the advancement of its interests. Let them be zealous to acquire all the information in their power relative to Universalism, its history, and present condition in their respective neighborhoods or limits, and communicate the same directly to the Secretary, or to the Society when in session.

It is ardently hoped that the evident interest manifested by members at the late session will not be suffered to decline, and that at the next session, reports will be presented to the Society, showing still more clearly the importance and utility of this recent but promising institution.

T. J. SAWYER.

A FEW THOUGHTS.

Original.

This life is at best but a chequered scene. Man at best is but a frail, imperfect creature. All things around him flourish but to decay, and he lives but to die. Yet he hopes to live again. There is in the human breast 'a strong desire and longing after immortality,' which lives inseparably with his existence. Man not only desires to live hereafter, but he desires to live in the realm of happiness. It is presumed that there is not a man, woman, or child, on the earth's broad surface, that would be willing to say—'I do not wish a happy immortality for all the human race.' But be this as it may, one thing is certain, no man, unless a very demon, would wish one of his race miserable immortality. It would be paying but poor compliment to the human race to say, that as a whole, they did not ardently wish for happiness for all beyond the tomb.

But, perhaps, this point need not be further urged. It is conceded. Even those who say they believe in an existence hereafter of endless misery, also say they hope their belief is false, and happy immortality for all is true. This at least does honor to their hearts. But would not such persons be justified in making the enquiry, whether they can hope for more than a God of infinite goodness will bestow. A man moderately benevolently, would, were his power commensurate

with his wishes, bestow a life of bliss upon all. Will God do less?

These few things premised, the attention of the reader is invited to a contemplation of that hope, set forth in the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The apostles of the Gentiles, calls the gospel hope an anchor to the soul, *sure* and *steadfast*. Now, as man is frail and unstable, it follows as a clear inference, that in order for the gospel hope to be *sure*, it must rest for its stability upon some other foundation than mutable man. This fact is not only clearly inferred, but it is positively declared.

The oath of the immutable God is the anchorage ground on which the gospel Hope casts her anchor. Men are much disposed to build their hopes on their experience, faith, feelings, or works. Methinks this was not the case with the Psalmist. 'He says, "Hope in God" and "Trust in God at all times." Blest assurance, that we may trust in God at all times, in sickness, health, weal, woe, and death,—and trust securely. The skillful manner; never throws his anchor in to his ship to enable him to outride the storm in safety, but overboard upon the firm bottom of the ocean! So should it be with man. He has nothing within himself, that will furnish a sure foundation. His hope must be in God—his trust in that Arm which is strong to deliver and mighty to save. Such a foundation is found in that faith once delivered to the Saints, which is the substance of things hoped for, contained in the promises of God, to bless, in the Saviour of the world, all the nations, families and kindreds of the earth.

What if some do not believe? God is true. He is not man that he should lie, nor the Son of man that he should repent. He commands and it stands.

'Then should the earth firm pillows shake,
And all the wheels of nature break;
Our steady souls shall fear no more,
Than solid rocks when billows roar.'

Brattleboro, Vt.

— C. W.

WORSHIP GOD.

Original.

What can be more satisfying to a mind, feeling its dependence on the Supreme Being, than to mingle in the devout congregation, and offer thanksgiving to the Most High? What is more becoming a universe of moral and intellectual beings, than to worship the Father in 'spirit and in truth?' O, if there be a scene this side the grave, that can arrest the attention of the reflecting traveller, and cause him to ask as he pauses,—what am I! from whence? and whither bound in the journey of life?—it is that, where kindred souls, mingle their devout aspirations together. Is there a being in the image of God, that has no relish for these sacred enjoyments? I pity him. He is of all men most miserable. He possesses an existence; but is almost angry thereto. He must die; but has no hope to cheer, no faith to sustain him, as he descends the declivity of life, and passes into—nothing! Who that loves life, with its ten thousand charms, can contemplate the utter extinction of HIMSELF (!) without a chill of horror touching every fibre of his soul? I feel it, as I write,—communicated by the power of sympathy.

I began this article, with a design to touch upon

the importance of order and propriety while in the house of worship. It appears to me, that, when the minister is addressing the throne of Grace, as the organ of a congregation, his petition should be listened to, with united devotion. I have frequently noticed, that *singers* will consult together about the 'next tune' that is to be sung, while the minister is at prayer, and sometimes times they whisper so loudly, that it is a disturbance to others. If any singer should read this article, I would ask, if propriety would not dictate a different course.

But this is not by any means the worst instance I have to introduce. I have witnessed with sorrow, that some of our ministering brethren 'do the same things.' When we have Conventions, Assemblies, &c. it is not uncommon for the one who has the charge of matters, to go to one and another, and give directions, during the praying after sermon. He will, first, perhaps, give the Sexton *his* orders,—then go into the desk, and hold a consultation with one of the ministers—something is then communicated to the singers, and forthwith the leaves begin to rustle, and so, by the time the prayer is finished, they are 'all ready,' and the business is done up in a workman-like-manner. Now, kind reader, look it all over, and tell me how much real devotion there is in these people. For my own part, I am opposed to such proceedings altogether. If we meet to 'worship God,' let us do it 'decently and in order.'—Let us pray with the *spirit* as well as with the understanding, and thus grow in grace, continually approximating to the divine perfections of our heavenly Father.

J. B.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—The absence of the editor will be our apology for not attending to our Correspondents. A longer apology is delayed for the same reason.

C. N. B. The dedication sermon by Br. L. D. Williamson published in our last, was delivered at the dedication of the New Meeting House in Troy, New York.

Religious Notices.

Br. W. A. Stickney will preach in Burlington the 2d Sunday in October, and a lecture in Collinsville, at Humphrey's Hall, 4 o'clock the same day.

Br. Williams will preach at Poquonick on the 2d Sabbath in Oct.

Br. Shrigley will preach at Hamburg on Saturday evening Oct. 10th and at Millington on the 2d Sabbath in October.

Br. Williams will preach at Broad Brook on the 3d Sabbath in October, and a lecture at Dry Brook at 7 o'clock same day.

Br. Shrigley will preach at Suffield centre, on the third Sabbath in October.

Br. M. B. Newell will preach in East Hartland on the 2d Sabbath in Oct.

There will be preaching at Hitchcocksburg on the third Sabbath in Oct.

Br. J. H. Willis, will preach at Union on the 4th Sabbath in Oct.

There will be preaching at Granby, on the 3d Sabbath inst.

Br. J. Shrigley will preach at Durham on Friday evening Oct. 23, and at Killingworth on the 4th Sabbath in Oct.

The Connecticut State Convention of Universalists will hold its annual session, in Barkhamsted, Ct. on the 2d Wednesday and following Thursday (14th and 15th) of Oct. next.

M. H. SMITH,
Standing Clerk.

POETRY.

The Rill.

The rill, which at its mountain source
Possesses such a feeble force,
That vain is all the school-boy's skill
To make it turn his tiny mill,
Or float the barque of fairy size,
Which weltering in its current lies;
That rill may roll from dell to dell,
And other streams its bulk may swell,
Till ruthless and resistless grown,
It rends the mountains' rocky throne;
Or forms the lake's majestic tide,
Where anchored navies proudly ride.

Thus he, who in his heart inclined
To bless or benefit mankind,
Shall all alone the work essay,
May find his labors cast away.
But if combined with heart and hand,
The master spirits of the land
Shall vice or bigotry assail,
They will not and they cannot fail.
For like that widening deepening rill,
Their phalanx waxes stronger still,
And gathering might and stretching wide,
Rolls on with resistless tide,
Till guilt o'erwhelmed with shame and dread
In shades of darkness shrouds his head,
And Dagon from his basement riven,
Falls down before the ark of heaven!

'There shall be two in the field: the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.' Matt. 24: 40, 42,

Many honest and well meaning people imagine that this portion of holy writ has a particular reference to the day of judgment, to the final separation which they believe is to take place at the closing up of all earthly accounts; when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the assembled universe shall have surrounded the throne of Omnipotence. We do not so understand it; we believe that Jesus alludes to things of a temporal nature—that were then near at hand would all be fulfilled in the present generation. As proof of our position we will transcribe the opinions of several eminent commentators on the above passage.— Hammond thus writes, 'Then shall there be many acts of God's providence discerned in rescuing one from that calamity wherein another is destroyed, especially that of departing out of Judea, verse 16 which the believers generally did, at Gallas' raising the seige, the rest staying behind and so being destroyed. Two persons in the same field together, shall be thus discriminated in their fate; two women grinding together or turning a hand mill, one of them shall stay, & be destroyed, & the other that was in the same place and danger with her shall, as by the angel that hurried Lot out of Sodom, or otherwise, by some invisible disposition of that providence which waits on his faithful servants be rescued from that destruction.'—Whitby—whose Commentary upon the New Testament is considered superior to any extant says.— 'This by Dr. Hammond seems to be well referred to the especial providence of God discernible in those times, in rescuing some who seemed equally exposed to danger, from the destruction which shall fall on others: for that it relates not to the final judgment, but times of the destruction of the Jews by the Roman army, is

evident from the same words recorded by St. Luke Chapt. 17—35, 36. For there the disciples ask their Lord where shall this be? and Christ answers, verse 37, that where the carcasse [i. e.: the Jews] are, there will the eagles [i. e.: the Roman army, whose ensign was the eagle] be gathered together. And hence it is also evident, that the following words being connected to those by the copulative *or* thus, which therefore must refer to the same subject, Clarke adds his testimony in the following words: 'The meaning seems to be that so general should those calamities be, that no two persons, wheresoever found, or about whatsoever employed, should be both able to effect their escape; and that captivity and the sword should have a complete triumph over this unhappy people.'

We think it must appear plain that, the inspired penman alluded to the destruction of the Jews as a nation, and not to a future judgment. If it were not so, we should suppose that Jesus would have expressed himself in quite different language.

Intelligene.

Of what Benefit is the Devil?

A DIALOGUE.

We should naturally suppose from the great do our Limitarian revivalist brethren make about the defence of his grace majesty, the devil, and the zeal which they manifest in the propagation of the doctrines of devils, that he was really one of the most valuable and important beings in the universe. Something like the following amusing colloquy upon this subject took place a few days since, between a new measure, alias, a Limitarian brother, and a scriptural measure, alias, a Universalist. It shows that the *actions* of our Orthodox brethren do not correspond with their words.

Universalist. Good morning, friend O.— Permit me to inquire of you this morning, for the purpose of edification and information—Of what benefit or use is a personal devil to the universe, God or man? Is he of the least benefit to God?

Orthodox. No: surely not.

U. Very well: but do you believe that he is of any benefit to mankind?

O. No, indeed: he is the arch enemy of our race, the primeval cause of all the woes entailed upon man, the tempter, the seducer of all created intelligences!

U. Then you acknowledge that the devil, so far from being of any honor or benefit to God or man, is the greatest possible curse to our race, and dishonor to God and his government! For what purpose then was he created? for what purpose is he permitted to subvert and thwart the will and purposes of the Great Eternal, in seducing and rendering the greatest part of mankind endlessly wretched? You have acknowledged that the devil is of no benefit to the universe, God or man; consequently, he must have been created and permitted to seduce our race for some *evil* and *malign* purpose! What, Sir, is the use or benefit of such a being? Will you favor me with an answer? *What is the benefit?*

O. O, 'great is the mystery of godliness!'

U. Ah, verily; and 'great is the mystery of the devil, forsooth! is it not? Come, brother O., be frank and candid; hazard an opinion, at least. *What is the benefit?*

O. Why, as to the benefit—it is all to—to himself, I suppose!

U. Well, this is undoubtedly the most plausible and consistent answer that can be given by a believer in your faith; but grant it, and what then? the devil, you must acknowledge, owes many thanks to his Creator for the 'benefit of the act,' and who permits him to thus benefit himself? at the infinite expense of God's honor, his government and law—and of millions of immortal souls! Horrible, most horrible indeed! What a dreadful, fatal 'benefit' this must be!

O. Ah, that is always the way with you— you are full of your quibbles—indeed you are—good morning—I am in haste!

U. Good morning, brother O.—no offence, I hope.

O. Not in the least, O no—good morning (Exit O.)

But, reader, let me press the question upon you: *WHAT IS THE USE?*

Herald of Truth.

THE LOVE OF TRUTH.—Truth is lovely in its nature; there is no truth in the system of nature which is not lovely.—There is none which has ever been found out by art that is not lovely.—If we ask the philosopher if he has made any discoveries in nature, or ascertained any facts in its law which cause him any sorrow, or that he could wish were otherwise, he will answer, no. All he has seen harmonize in one beautiful whole. If we ask the astronomer, if, in studying the heavenly bodies, and their motions, he has learned a subject of regret, at which he grieves? he will answer no. Every thing is beautiful and lovely in its order. If we ask the artist, we shall receive a similar answer; but if we ask the divines, commonly so called, the systems of truth which they study are full of subjects of deep regret, and lasting sorrow! The conclusion is, they have not received the love of the truth.

Marrsages.

In Tolland, by the Rev. Abraham Marsh, Mr. James Stewart of Vernon, to Miss Mary C. West, daughter of Ebenezer West, of Tolland.

In this city, Mr. Alonzo Blodget, of Brattleborough, to Miss Juliette Loomis, of this city.

In Bloomfield, Mr. Chauncy Beach, of this city, to Miss Mary Cadwell, of the former place.

In Salisbury, Alexander H. Holly, Esq. to Miss Marcia Coffing, daughter of John C. Coffing, Esq. all of Salisbury.

Deaths.

In Weathersfield, Mr. Elijah G. Morris, aged 71. In Durham, Mrs. Hannah M. Merriman, aged 24 years, daughter of Mr. Harry Camp.

In Farmington, A. J. Tarbox, aged 24, formerly of Mass.

In Norwich, Mr. Simeon Steele, aged 34, a native of Berlin.

REMOVALS.

THE OFFICE of the Inquirer and Anchor in Hartford, is removed to the building formerly owned and occupied by Mr. N. Ruggles in Main St. a few rods south west of the State House square.

The office of the Inquirer and Anchor in Albany is removed to the room over E. Murdoch's store directly opposite the Eagle Tavern, South Market st.